HARAMBEE

FLAME!

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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Afrikans are beautiful in our own right rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural awareness is germane to human growth.

EDITORIAL

In 1990, Jean-Bertrand Aristide won Haiti's presidential election, garnering approximately two thirds of the votes cast. Within a matter of months, he was run out of his country by political hoodlums who were and are elements of the legacy of rule by terror and intimidation visited upon the Haitian people by former president-for-life, "Baby Doc" Duvalier and, before him, his daddy, "Papa Doc" Duvalier. Since the toppling of the Aristide administration, Haiti has returned to the status quo of government-directed terror and intimidation, apparently under the headmanship of General Raoul Cedras and police commander Lieutenant Colonel Michel Francois. Members of the deposed Aristide administration have been murdered or forced into exile, as have been many who have shown public support for Aristide.

As of this writing, six U.S. warships are cruising in the waters off Haiti's coast and may be joined shortly by ships from other countries. These ships will be enforcing a re-imposed U.N. embargo against the renegade Haitian government Embargoed products include: petroleum and petroleum products, weapons and ammunition, military and police vehicles, etc.

This embargo is to continue until such time as General Cedras steps down and permits the safe return of President Aristide. In the Haitian population, as well as in the Haitian-in-exile populations in the U.S. and elsewhere, considerable hope that the resumption of an Aristide presidency will actually bring to Haiti, for the first time in decades, justice for the masses of the island nation's overwhelmingly African population.

Most probably, the majority of Haitians would like to see Cedras and his "attaches"(reportedly a part of or closely connected to the ton-tons macoutes who served as brutal goons for the Duvalier regimes) kicked out of their ill-gotten positions of power by any means necessary, including the force of arms. The United States of (Occupied)America is certainly in a position to do this. But, more than likely, a large portion of Haitians who would like to see the political bandits removed by any means necessary are opposed to U.S. military intervention.

National pride plays a part in this. But beyond that, the people of Haiti are not ignorant of Uncle Sam's history of imperialism in the Americas. The U.S.-led economic embargo of Cuba, along with numerous other attempts at sabotage of Cuba's very existence, has been going on for more than thirty years. There was the 1983 invasion and occupation of Grenada. And, in fact, the history of the U.S, in relationship to much of the rest of the Americas, has been, for almost two centuries, a history of a bully trying to dictate to his neighbors.

In short, our Sisters and Brothers in Haiti are stuck in a brutal squeeze-play of options. Without intervention, they face continuing oppression from within. With intervention(on the part of the U.S. in particular), they risk oppression and domination from without.

It wasn't too long ago that we were seeing frequent footage of horrific starvation in Somalia, of competing factions of Somalis preventing food shipments from getting to people in dire need of food, of armed groups gunning each other down and any others in the way of their fire-fights. We understand that the stage for these atrocities had been set by various cold-war maneuverings in Somalia by the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., as well as previous colonial intrigues. But the result was Africans being starved and slaughtered by other Africans. Something had to be done. As we well know, something was done. The U.N. stepped in. Now it appears that the starving in Somalia has essentially ended and the country is, for the most part, without violent conflict, at least among Somalis.

But what began as a <u>supposedly</u> purely humanitarian intervention has increasingly taken on political overtones. And in Mogadishu in particular, Somalis are becoming increasingly impatient with the continuing U.N. presence. However, they are faced with the real possibility that, if the U.N. pulls out tomorrow, the Somali Uncle Toms will throw Somalia back into chaos and immeasurable suffering in their quests for political dominance.

Like Africans in Haiti, Africans in Somalia are faced with the choice of being oppressed by their own or oppressed by outsiders.

In cities throughout the U.S., violence among youth is sending torrents of blood through the streets. African and Latino communities are being especially hard hit by this violence. Children and youth are killing and being killed over colors, "funny looks" in the eyes, hand signals, and are often simply blown away in cross-fires or for "fun." Frequently the deaths result from gang feuds. As the crime scenes are roped off and funerals held, African people in these veritable war zones are feeling less and less safe, are feeling more and more afraid for their children, and are either desperately looking for answers to the blood bath or simply despairing. And even though it is the U.S.' racist and capitalist institutions that are ultimately responsible for this epidemic of African-on-African violence and murders, it is our own people who are actually pulling the triggers of the Desert Eagles, Tech 9s, Mach 10s, and other weapons of our own destruction.

Faced with this situation, we seem to be primarily seeking answers from the very institution that has given us an all-beat-the-hell-up Rodney King, a dead Malice Green, and countless other African victims of racist police power. It is as if we were chickens who, fighting among ourselves, call upon the fox to bring peace among us. And we are not only faced with police abuse of authority when we invite them into our communities to protect us from each other. We turn our own people over to what is, in essence, a foreign and colonial criminal "justice" system, which includes the courts, prisons, probation and parole authorities, etc. and which has separate brands of "justice" for people of color and Caucasians, for the well-to-do and the poor and which otherwise deals off the bottom of the deck to us.

Whether the city is Port au Prince, Mogadishu, or Omaha, we are African people confronted with the same problem: colonial-subject mentality. We are lacking the confidence and/or willingness to act collectively to solve the problem of our victimization, whether it comes from the outside directly or from within. The many decades of being under the thumb of European power have served to convince us that we are powerless. Yes, something had to be done in Mogadishu. But where was the Organization of African Unity? Unquestionably, the African cont-

inent as a whole, while rich in natural resources, faces severe economic difficulty and doesn't have the money to initiate military operations with the same ease as the U.S. or the other "major powers." But if you have the will to live, you use what you have to get what you need. Though the cold war between the U.S. and the former U.S.S.R. and, before that, colonialism did much to create the situation in Somalia that the U.N. has intervened in, that situation is a problem among Africans and should be solved by Africans.

In Haiti, the political bandits("attaches" and the tontons macoutes) are, for the most part, African people. And it is the popular will of African people that they are thwarting through murder and other mayhem. If the African people of Haiti do not have the power to deal with these criminals, then they ought to receive help from other African people. What prevents the establishment of a military force, made up of African volunteers from the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Jamaica, the U.S., and other countries and funded by private sources(Charles Barkley could afford to kick in a million or two.), to make itself available to the Haitian people?

With all the African police, soldiers, military reservists, and persons formerly of these occupations that there are in our communities here in the United States of (Occupied) America, it is ludicrous to believe that we don't have the capacity to police our own neighborhoods. Of course, the ability to properly handle a weapon and the fact that a person has received military or/and paramilitary training in other areas by no means make a person suitable for duty in a policing arm run by and for African people and under our control. A strong Africentric consciousness is required of an African man or woman. But just as we have the capacity to do other things, we have the capacity to educate our own.

Two of our greatest needs as African people are to come to the realization that we have the mental and spiritual power to quit acting like colonial subjects and begin(moreso than we are doing at present) to act collectively, on our own initiative, and on our own behalf and to acquire and nurture a global, pan-Africanist perspective. We can do this.

-Editor

EDITORIAL POLICY

The HARAMBEE FLAME, the monthly publication of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(parent chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization, Inc.), is a pan-Africanist newsletter. The FLAME's priority, with respect to news and views, is African people, events and developments which affect us and are, or should be, of concern to us. The FLAME does not recognize any distinctions between African people based solely on place of birth. References in the FLAME to Africans are made on the basis of our common ancestry. An exception to this is the reprinting of articles, or excerpts thereof, from other publications, in which cases we do not alter "black" or other terms designating African people. Th s is our practice because we do not wish to diminish the integrity and authenticity of the articles we excerpt from. Also, unless necessary for clarification, we generally don't correct typing or other errors contained in these articles. Please bring any errors you may find in the FLAME to our attention.

Articles contained in the FLAME do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization unless they are accompanied by a statement identifying the views as those of the organization. Generally speaking, all unsigned articles are by the editor, Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa(p.k.a. David Rice).

We encourage you to submit articles to the FLAME. Please enclose with your submission a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Articles should not exceed 1200 words, though longer pieces will not automatically be rejected. Short stories are subject to the same restriction with respect to length. We also welcome poetry and graphics. Submitted poems should not sacrifice power and beauty for the sake of uniform rhythm and /or rhyme. Send submissions to the editor:

HARAMBEE FLAME/H.A.C.O.
P.O. Box 2500
Lincoln, NE 68542-2500

..."The Sept. 16 town hall meeting, the second of three forums on 'Race in America' that became the highlight of the Congressional Black Caucus' 23rd Annual Legislative Weekend, drew some 3,000 curious and vocal onlookers...

"Panel members--Rev. Jesse Jackson, Rep. Maxine Waters(D-Calif.), Min. Farrakhan, and Rev. Ben Chavis--represent 'the clearest thinkers in America', said CBC chairman Kweisi Mfume(D-Md.), a panel member who convened the forum. The discussion was moderated by ABC television news reporter Carole Simpson and aired live on C-Span cable network.

"One reason for the intense curiosity was the swirling controversy surrounding Min. Farrakhan's absence from the 1993 March on Washington just three weeks earlier. A confidential memo from Rabbi David Saperstein of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, which surfaced several days prior to the Aug. 28 march, chided Black organizers for inviting Min. Farrakhan to speak without Mr. Saperstein's 'prior consultation'...The memo was addressed to Rev. Jackson and Rev. Chavis, among others...

"...the first question from the audience was directed to Min. Farrakhan and Rev. Jackson and went right to the point: How can the people be united when leadership is disunited?

"'When you talk about disunity, don't talk to Bro. Farrakhan', the Minister answered, citing his long record of coming to the defense of Black leaders and his defense of Rev. Jackson in the reverend's 1984 presidential run...

"Rev. Jackson observed that he and Min. Farrakhan need not convene a press conference to announce they have reconciled. Instead, he cited a need for 'operational unity' on 'principles and policy direction, and not on personality'. He called attention to 'empowerment issues' such as D.C. statehood, health care, and establishing a social contract before supporting NAFTA(North American Free Trade Agreement)...

"Rev. Chavis interjected that 'there's no single answer to our predicament' and that he had come 'in pursuit of greater

clarity of what unites us than divides us'...

"...in his closing remarks, Rev. Chavis broke the ice: 'It was a mistake not to have Minister Farrakhan speak at the March on Washington. We(NAACP) have the courage to say that', he said as the audience roared their approval.

"'But it was also a mistake for your publication(*The Final Call*) to denounce brothers who did not prevent you from speaking', he added.

"The newly appointed director of the NAACP was referring to *Final Call* coverage of the March on Washington and Minister Farrakhan's open letter to Jewish leadership, titled 'Let My People Go'.

"In the letter, Min. Farrakhan charged that many Black religious, political, entertainment and sports leaders are 'under the control, domination and influence' of a small, but powerful minority of Jewish leaders. Min. Farrakhan said he would expose all so-called leaders who bow down and compromise the future of Black people...

"Rep. Maxine Waters drew enthusiastic applause with her urging that Black leaders must overcome fear and for her analysis of the race problem. She said there is a 'concentrated, well organized' effort to keep our voices quiet on the question of race...

"Capping the afternoon meeting with a statement symbolic of a healing for the Black community, Rep. Mfume announced: 'We want the word to go forward today to friend and foe alike that the Congressional Black Caucus, after having entered into a sacred covenant with the NAACP to work for real and meaningful change, will enter into that same covenant with the Nation of Islam' and other organizations such as fraternities, sororities, and other organizations."

-from "Our Unity Is The Key," page 3 and 8, Oct. 13 THE FINAL CALL(Chicago, IL)

Sea Islands People Face U.S.-Style Apartheid

"Tucked away in the South Carolina Sea is Daufuskie Island... Africa's sons and daughters were brought to the beautiful Sea Islands, that stretch from Charleston, South Carolina to Savannah, Georgia. Isolated from the mainland, they planted, harvested and tilled the land, and forged a courageous, strong African culture - a culture not only of survival but one of artistry, beauty and hope. They developed a unique language called Gullah or Geechee...

"The Great White land developers *discovered* Daufuskie in the mid-1980s and staked their claims. One such company, Melrose Co., began to develop luxury homes over the ancestral burial grounds. It is said that that the Melrose Co. unearthed the remains and threw them in the river...

"Also in 1984 Melrose bought up 720 acres of Daufuskie for $6.5 million. With the arrival of the Melrose plantation came fences, 'members only' signs and the take over of the road leading to one of Daufuskie's nicest beaches...

"Emory Campbell, a Hilton Head native, likens the situation to a 'Third World' kind of thing where people have become landless, hold low-paying jobs and need passes to go anywhere...

"On Sapelo Island, the population has decreased two fold. The old confectionery is shut down, the local fishery has been taken over by large scale mainland operations and the two schools are closed. The youth are forced to leave the island because they have no other choice...

"The island was once a pasture for cows, until the theft of the land for the Hiag Point Golf Course in 1986. The cows were carried off the island on a barge so they wouldn't interfere with the masters' extremely important leisure..."

-from "Stealing The Land," pages 3 and 16, Sept. ARM THE MASSES(New York, N.Y.)

Prison Control Units: Spreading And Under Fire

"...control unit prisons exist in 36 states and could keep spreading. This month marks the 10th anniversary of the Marion lockdown...

"...control unit conditions include:
- 22.5 hours a day or more locked in a single or double cell.
- no eating, exercise or religious services with others.
- no work opportunities, or any of their benefits such as good time.
- very limited phone calls and visits, with no physical contact at visits.
- limited educational opportunities, if at all, only through correspondence courses, closed circuit TV nd instructional tapes.
- no due process, lack of rules and written procedures for transfers to or from control units.

"These conditions result in:
- brutal treatment, including long-term isolation, forced idleness, excessive restraints and property confiscation.
- discrimination in placement and over classification, especially affecting jailhouse lawyers, organizers and those struggling to exercise their religious rights...

"Since Pelican Bay...opened in 1989, prisoners have flooded the courts with complaints. As a result, Northern District of California federal judges held a meeting with the Pelican Bay warden and attorneys from the California attorney general's office in 1991...That case has been converted into a class action law suit as a result of the extreme conditions at the prison.

"In the suit, Madrid v. Gomez(Case No. C-90-3094, U.S. District Court for Northern California), the prisoners say that the prison's deliberate use of excessive force and isolation and failure to provide medical care, meaningful access to the courts, and due process in segregation assignments results in in unjustifiable suffering and violates the prisoners rights under the First, Sixth, Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. constitution. The case went to a non-jury trial in the middle of September..."

-from "Control Units 10 Years Later, pages 1 and 2,

Oct. COALITION for PRISONERS RIGHTS Newsletter(Santa Fe, N.M.)

Cuba Caught In Squeeze Between U.S. Embargo And Collapse Of Soviet Union

(Editor's note: At least a third of the population of Cuba is African. Around 20,000 troops from Cuba fought alongside Angolan fighters against the U.S. and South African-backed UNITA rebels. About a quarter of a million doctors, engineers, soldiers, etc. have been in Africa assisting directly or indirectly in African liberation efforts. In the late '80s, at least 15,000 students from the African continent attended institutions of higher learning in Cuba, free of charge.)

..."this tiny island achieved the highest standard of living for the working class of anywhere in Latin America. The official statistics list a Gross National Product of $2,500 per person. That is roughly the same as Argentina...the level of inequality is immensely less in Cuba. You can just see that the working-class districts in and around Havana and Santiago de Cuba are much better off than the huge slums surrounding Buenos Aires..

"infant mortality in Cuba is now down to 9.3 per thousand, less than New York City, and it has continued to fall during this severe economic crisis. The Cubans say proudly that despite all the shortages they haven't closed a single hospital...Life expectancy at birth is 72 years for men and 76 for women. The literacy rate of 96.2 percent is above that of the U.S.: 88 percent of school-age children go to secondary school...

"Cuba had the second-highest food intake per capi-

ta in Latin America, with a calorie consumption of over 3,100 a day. Ninety-five percent of the population has electricity. With 22.5 percent of the workforce employed in industry(and another 16 percent in construction and transport), it was far and away the most industrialized country in Latin America...But all of a sudden, this country has been brutally thrown back into a pre-industrial period...

"The situation is excruciating, because they are caught between the American blockade and the collapse of the Soviet bloc...

"The fact that Cuba has been able to hold out against this tremendous pressure is a direct result of the collectivized property. Take the question of energy and transportation. Due to the Soviet cutoff of oil to Cuba, energy supplies were slashed to about 30 percent of what they were. That meant a number of industries have been cut way back, and transport was effectively militarized. They imported more than a million bicycles from China, and Cuba started producing its own bikes. They also began manufacturing carts to serve as horse-drawn taxis...And if you have to go further than a bicycle or horse and buggy will take you, you wait at a transport point. There is a policeman at each one of these points, and he simply flags down every passing state-owned vehicle--whether it's a flat-bed truck, or a bus, or a little car--and it stops, and people are put on it. People often have to wait for two hours for long-distance transport...

"The blackouts when we were there were about eight hours a day per neighborhood. They went up to 16 hours a day in August when they shut down some industries altogether for vacation, although now they have been reduced again. It's put in the paper when you're going to have it...Of course, given the paper shortage it is extremely hard to get a newspaper at all: they eliminated all of the dailies except *Granma*, cut them back to weeklies...

"...there is very little to eat...the ration list in Centro Habana: Bread--one roll a day...Rice---five pounds a month. Dried beans---TEN OUNCES a month...Chicken---HALF A POUND every TWO MONTHS...Eggs---16 a month. Fish---two pounds a month, that's the main source of protein, which they continue to get because Canada lets Cuba fish off Newfoundland. And milk is available for children up to the age of seven, but

nobody else...

"a good part of the food shortage is a result of the fact that they decided, within the framework of COMECON, the Soviet bloc 'common market', to concentrate on sugar production and import food from the Soviet Union. But now that is gone. Cuba is a very fertile island, and has the capability of producing many foods. We saw a lot of brigades out building vegetable gardens in the workers' housing districts... But this is the tropics, and sometimes the lush foliage is deceptive. For example, they successfully managed to adapt milk-producing cows by crossing Holsteins and Cebus. But they need imported feed--tropical grasses are not very nourishing, full of water--for which they now have to pay hard currency, that Cuba doesn't have, to Canada...

"Or take the case of this strange eye disease, what they named 'optic neuritis'...The doctors decided from the evidence that vitamin deficiency is one of several possible contributing causes. With the food shortages, which have cut the rations down to something like 1,200 calories a day, even though no one is starving there's a real danger of malnutrition. The government decided to produce a B-complex multivitamin pill, and within 35 days from finding out about the existence of the disease, they started production of this pill...These pills are given to the family doctors ...who go around and distribute these pills. Once a month you get a package of 30 pills for yourself, another 30 for each child, for everybody in the household...

-from "Cuba In Peril," pages 6,7,8, and 10; Oct. 8 WORKERS VANGUARD(N.Y., N.Y.)

SOMEWHERE by Dunsimi(Jimi Wayne)

A tear fell somewhere
someone said it was over happiness
at the birth of a child
baby didn't sound too happy about it
though

A tear fell somewhere
I heard it was because baby
was growing up so fast that
momma was scared for baby's future

A tear fell somewhere
it shattered like glass
on the floor
I know where the tears have fallen too
I'm always cutting myself on them
as I grope around in darkness
looking for the light
of understanding.

Dunsimi, in addition to writing, also paints. He is a prisoner at the Nebraska State Penitentiary in Lincoln.

HARAMBEE FLAME

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To bring us together, he(Marcus Carvey)had to battle against all the concepts that were used to divide us. In the past we were loyal to "tribe," religion, and nationality and not to race. In addition we were divided along class lines, educational lines, skin color, lipsize, and hair texture. We were not only divided against ourselves but had been made to hate everything African about us. Under Garvey's "Philosophy of Black Nationalism" we embraced the spirit of Black pride, which meant that everything from a baby doll to Jesus Christ ought to be Black and in our own image. He also taught that we had a glorious, ancient, African history and that every inch of Africa's 12,000,000 square miles belongs to those Africans at home and to those abroad and that not one inch belonged to the white man anywhere. To Garvey, permanent freedom meant a mighty, POWERFUL nation on the continent of Africa that would represent the interests and the protection of Africans everywhere...Garvey saw that we had been successfully conned into believing that being born in America made us Americans. This had served as good propaganda to get us to fight in America's wars, from the Revolutionary to the Gulf...

Garvey knew that if the African sith some technology abroad hooked up with and liberated the African at hoem(who had the mineral resources), Africans could not be taken advantage of anywhere. It was for international trade and travel that he started the Black Star Line Steamship company.

SOURCE: Volume IV, No. 1 MOBETTER NEWS, from an article by Aonda Dansby-Shaka

PRESS RELEASE

Pan Africanist Congress Voices Concerns Regarding South African "Road To Democracy"

(Editor's note: The following are excerpts from a September 28 United Nations Dept. of Public Information press release.)

..."When the Convention for a Democratic South Africa(CODESA) was organized in 1992, some countries proceeded to lift economic sanctions against the racist regime, Mr. Alexander (Benny Alexander, Secretary-General of the P.A.C.) said. After warnings from the PAC, the CODESA talks broke down on 17 May 1992.

"South Africa's Transitional Executive Council was a 'gigantic fraud', Mr. Alexander said. The Council would co-exist with the De Klerk regime, so it could not be called a 'transitional government'. The Council would take decisions by a 75 per cent majority; the De Klerk regime, with two votes of its own, would be able to have minority veto power over all decisions...

"Under the Council arrangement, the South African defence forces would remain in place with liberation armies, however, being reduced to the role of auxiliary wings of that 'illegimate military force', he said. All decisions taken by the Council affecting South African security forces required a 75 per cent majority. That meant that the regime's Minister of Defence had a double veto over the Council on military matters...

"The PAC believed that all remaining sanctions against South Africa should remain in place pending a new constitution and free elections. The Transitional Executive Council, operating under the double veto of the Minister of Defence, could not be said to constitute 'profound and irreversible change'. Those advocating the lifting of sanctions against South Africa had maintained sanctions and blockades against countries like Libra, Iraq and Cuba for supposed violations of human rights. Investors should come to South Africa only after the establishment of a new constitution and a government controlled by the African majority, he said..."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Great Plains Black Museum will be conducting a fund-raising bake sale November 11th through the 25th. Among the baked goods to be sold are: sweet potato pie, peach cobbler, carrot cake, lemon meringue pie, pecan pie, cheese cake, better-than-sex cake, 7-up pound cake, Kentucky jam cake. In addition, turkey with dressing can be ordered. To order, call 345-2212. Generally, the donation asked for each item is $15. Editor's note: We have not been able to confirm the veracity of the "better-than-sex" claim regarding one of the baked goods. We urge our readers to send us reports on this "better-than-sex" item. That's something that had better be some real good stuff.

Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization meetings during the month of November will be held on the 2nd, 13th, 16th, 27th, and 30th. These are meetings for the prison chapter in Lincoln(14th & Pioneer Blvd. We urge people from the outside African communities of Omaha and Lincoln to get involved in our programs. For more information, write to: Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, NE; 68542-2500. Or call 471-3161 and ask for extension 3380. Call between 12:30 and 2:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Our Saturday meetings run from 1-3 p.m. and the Tuesday meetings run from 6-8 p.m.

"Panning for Gold: Finding, Publishing, and Accessing Authentic Multicultural Materials" conference, Nov. 3-5, will be held at the Cathedral Hill Hotel in San Francisco in conjunction with the San Francisco Bay Area Book Festival and will feature over 24 workshops on all aspects of publishing from some of the most heralded professionals in the multicultural area. In addition to workshops, the conference offers a forum for small publishers to interact with prospective authors and illustrators, as well as the opportunity to meet with national distributors and booksellers. Contact (608) 244-5633 or MPE; Box 9869; Madison, WI; 53715.

The Aframerican Bookstore(3226 Lake) in Omaha announces that it now has the much talked about THE ORIGINAL AFRICAN HERITAGE STUDY BIBLE, which is published by James C. Winston. Major reference authors for this work include: Molefi Kete Asante, Cheikh Anta Diop, Ivan VanSertima, and other scholars.